



The final first teach date for A Level Art and Design: Critical and Contextual Studies (H606) is **September 2026**. The final assessment opportunity for the H606 qualification will be **Summer 2028**. There is no resit opportunity.

This specification will have a final assessment in summer 2027.

Our updated specification for first teach September 2026 can be found on the A Level Art and Design webpage.

Specification

A Level

Art and Design

Cambridge OCR Level 3 Advanced GCE
in Art and Design

H600–H606

For first assessment in 2017



About our new name

As of September 2025, our name is Cambridge OCR.

Students who sat an exam **in summer 2025** will receive a Cambridge OCR branded exam certificate (our new brand), which will be the same for all future exam series.

You'll continue to see the OCR or Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations name while we work to update our material to our new name, Cambridge OCR. This will take some time, and you can still access all up-to-date qualification resources and materials via [Teach Cambridge](#).

Important: We'll keep the OCR/Oxford Cambridge and RSA name on existing teaching resources while the content of these remains applicable to the specification being taught. **New and refreshed** resources will be produced using the Cambridge OCR name/logo.

Are you using the latest version of this specification?

The latest version of our specifications will always be on [our website](#) and may differ from printed versions. We will inform centres about changes to specifications.

Tell us what you think

Your feedback plays an important role in how we develop, market, support and resource qualifications now and into the future. We want you and your students to enjoy and get the best out of our qualifications and resources, but to do that we need your honest opinions to tell us whether we're on the right track or not.

You can email your thoughts to support@ocr.org.uk or visit our [feedback page](#) to learn more about how you can help us improve our qualifications.



Designing and testing in [collaboration with teachers](#) and students



Helping young people develop an [ethical view of the world](#)



Equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB) are [part of everything we do](#)

Contents

Introducing... A Level Art and Design specifications (from September 2015)	iii
Teaching and learning resources	iv
Professional development	v
1 Why choose an OCR A Level in Art and Design?	1
1a. Why choose an OCR qualification?	1
1b. Why choose an OCR A Level in Art and Design?	2
1c. What are the key features of this specification suite?	3
1d. How do I find out more information?	3
2 The specification overview	4
2a. Overview of A Level in Art and Design (H600-H606)	4
2b. Content of A Level in Art and Design (H600-H606)	5
2c. Core Content of A Level in Art and Design	8
2c. Summary of Specialisms and related Areas of Study	11
2c(i). Content of Art, Craft and Design: Combined Specialisms (H600)	14
2c(ii). Content of Art and Design: Fine Art (H601)	16
2c(iii). Content of Art and Design: Graphic Communication (H602)	18
2c(iv). Content of Art and Design: Photography (H603)	20
2c(v). Content of Art and Design: Textile Design (H604)	22
2c(vi). Content of Art and Design: Three-Dimensional Design (H605)	24
2c(vii). Content of Art and Design: Critical and Contextual Studies (H606)	26
2d. Prior knowledge, learning and progression	28
3 Assessment of OCR A Level in Art and Design	29
3a. Forms of assessment	29
3b. Assessment objectives (AO)	30
3c. Total qualification time	30
3d. Qualification availability outside of England	30
3e. Language	31
3f. Assessment availability	31
3g. Retaking the qualification	31
3h. Assessment of extended responses	31
3i. Non exam assessment – Marking criteria	31
3j. Synoptic assessment	37
3k. Calculating qualification results	37
4 Admin: what you need to know	38
4a. Pre-assessment	38
4b. Accessibility and special consideration	40
4c. Non exam assessment	40
4d. AI use in the NEA	42
4e. Results and certificates	43
4f. Post-results services	43
4g. Malpractice	43

5	Appendices	44
5a.	Overlap with other qualifications	44
5b.	Avoidance of bias	44
5c.	Carry forward entry codes	45
5d.	Moderated upload entry codes	46

	Summary of updates	47
--	--------------------	----

Introducing... A Level Art and Design specifications (from September 2015)

The OCR A Level Art and Design specifications are designed to encourage learners to develop skills, creativity, imagination and independence based on personal experience, taught skills and critical understanding. Learners show this through their responses to a range of stimuli.

The aims and learning outcomes for these qualifications are to enable learners to develop:

- Intellectual, imaginative, creative and intuitive capabilities
- Investigative, analytical, experimental, practical, technical and expressive skills, aesthetic understanding and critical judgement
- Independence of mind in developing, refining and communicating their own ideas, their own intentions and their own personal outcomes
- The experience of working with a broad range of media
- An understanding of the interrelationships between art, craft and design processes and an awareness of the contexts in which they operate.

Contact the team

We have a dedicated team of people working on our A Level Art and Design qualifications.

Find out more about our Art and Design team at ocr.org.uk/alevelartanddesign.

If you need specialist advice, guidance or support, get in touch as follows:

- 01223 553998
- art&design@ocr.org.uk

Teaching and learning resources

We recognise that the introduction of a new specification can bring challenges for implementation and teaching. Our aim is to help you at every stage and we're working hard to provide a practical package of support in close consultation with teachers and other experts, so we can help you to make the change.

Designed to support progression for all

Our resources are designed to provide you with a range of teaching activities and suggestions so you can select the best approach for your particular students. You are the experts on how your students learn and our aim is to support you in the best way we can.

We want to...

- Support you with a body of knowledge that grows throughout the lifetime of the specification
- Provide you with a range of suggestions so you can select the best activity, approach or context for your particular students
- Make it easier for you to explore and interact with our resource materials, in particular to develop your own schemes of work
- Create an ongoing conversation so we can develop materials that work for you.

Plenty of useful resources

You'll have four main types of subject-specific teaching and learning resources at your fingertips:

- Delivery Guides
- Transition Guides
- Topic Exploration Packs
- Lesson Elements.

Along with subject-specific resources, you'll also have access to a selection of generic resources that focus on skills development and professional guidance for teachers.

Skills Guides – we've produced a set of Skills Guides that are not specific to Art and Design, but each covers a topic that could be relevant to a range of qualifications – for example, communication, legislation and research. Download the guides at ocr.org.uk/skillsguides.

Active Results – a free online results analysis service to help you review the performance of individual students or your whole school. It provides access to detailed results data, enabling more comprehensive analysis of results in order to give you a more accurate measurement of the achievements of your centre and individual students. For more details refer to ocr.org.uk/activeresults.

Professional development

Take advantage of our improved Professional Development Programme, designed with you in mind. Whether you want to look at our new digital training or search for training materials, you can find what you're looking for all in one place at the CPD Hub.

An introduction to the new specifications

We'll be running events to help you get to grips with our A Level Art and Design qualification.

These events are designed to help prepare you for first teaching and to support your delivery at every stage.

Watch out for details at cpdhub.ocr.org.uk.

To receive the latest information about the training we'll be offering, please register for A Level email updates at ocr.org.uk/updates.

1 Why choose an OCR A Level in Art and Design?

1a. Why choose an OCR qualification?

Choose OCR and you've got the reassurance that you're working with one of the UK's leading exam boards. Our new A Level in Art and Design courses have been developed in consultation with teachers, employers and Higher Education to provide students with a qualification that's relevant to them and meets their needs.

We're part of the Cambridge Assessment Group, Europe's largest assessment agency and a department of the University of Cambridge. Cambridge Assessment plays a leading role in developing and delivering assessments throughout the world, operating in over 150 countries.

We work with teachers, employers, and universities to create qualifications that support the needs of all students and help them prepare for their future. We offer A levels, GCSEs, vocational courses, and other academic options to schools, colleges, workplaces, and other organisations.

Our Specifications

We believe in developing specifications that help you bring the subject to life and inspire your students to achieve more.

We've created teacher-friendly specifications based on extensive research and engagement with the teaching community. They're designed to be straightforward and accessible so that you can tailor the delivery of the course to suit your needs. We aim to encourage learners to become responsible for their own learning, confident in discussing ideas, innovative and engaged.

We provide a range of support services designed to help you at every stage, from preparation through to the delivery of our specifications. This includes:

- A wide range of high-quality creative resources including:
 - o Delivery Guides
 - o Transition Guides
 - o Topic Exploration Packs
 - o Lesson Elements
 - o ...and much more.
- Access to Subject Advisors to support you through the transition and throughout the lifetime of the specifications.
- CPD/Training for teachers to introduce the qualifications and prepare you for first teaching.
- Active Results – our free results analysis service to help you review the performance of individual students or whole schools.

All A level qualifications offered by OCR are accredited by Ofqual, the Regulator for qualifications offered in England. The accreditation number for OCR's A Level in Art and Design is QN: 601/5088/9.

1b. Why choose an OCR A Level in Art and Design?

This specification builds on the knowledge, skills and understanding established by the National Curriculum for Art and Design and is designed to contribute to the quality, breadth of choice and coherence of national provision.

It is designed to encourage learners to develop skills, creativity, imagination and independence based on personal experience, taught skills and critical understanding. Learners show this through their responses to a range of stimuli.

It provides an opportunity for learners to take a personal interest in why Art and Design matters and to be inspired and changed by studying a coherent, worthwhile course of study and gain experience of the working practices of individuals, organisations and creative and cultural industries.

It offers a 'framework' approach whereby centres can design and develop courses appropriate to their own learners and broad enough in design to allow flexibility in terms of delivery.

It provides freedom for learners to experiment and take risks with their work whilst developing their own style.

This Art and Design suite offers seven specialisms (endorsed titles) to choose from. These cover the depth and breadth of Art and Design including the use of traditional and digital production methods.

The OCR A Level in Art and Design is designed to allow centres to manage the diversity of different skills, knowledge and understanding required within the specialisms and areas of study.

Aims and learning outcomes

The aims and learning outcomes for these qualifications are to enable learners to develop:

- intellectual, imaginative, creative and intuitive capabilities
- investigative, analytical, experimental, practical, technical and expressive skills, aesthetic understanding and critical judgement
- independence of mind in developing, refining and communicating their own ideas, their own intentions and their own personal outcomes
- an interest in, enthusiasm for, and enjoyment of art, craft and design
- the experience of working with a broad range of media
- an understanding of the inter-relationships between art, craft and design processes and an awareness of the contexts in which they operate
- knowledge and experience of real world contexts and, where appropriate, links to the creative industries

- knowledge and understanding of art, craft, design and media and technologies in contemporary and past societies and cultures
- an awareness of different roles, functions, audiences and consumers of art, craft and design.

These qualifications offer learners an opportunity to fully develop and explore their chosen specialism(s) whilst expanding their knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of specialist areas.

Learners will develop a deep understanding of their chosen specialism and the ability to critically evaluate their own work and the work of others. Learners are able to tailor their course to fit their individual needs, choices and aspirations in order to follow their chosen progression route through to Further or Higher Education or the workplace.

1c. What are the key features of this specification suite?

- There is a choice of seven specialisms (endorsed titles) to choose from. Each is made up of two components: a Personal investigation (60%) and an Externally set task (40%).
- The Personal investigation has two integrated elements: a portfolio of practical work and a related study which explores the context in which their chosen practical area of study exists.
- This qualification provides clear marking criteria common to both the Personal investigation practical work and the Externally set task for all specialisms, in order to aid consistent application across components.
- This qualification provides clear, distinct assessment criteria for the related study as part of the Personal investigation marking criteria.
- This qualification offers assessment which is all internally marked and externally moderated by visit.
- There is a choice of themes for the Externally set task, which are open to all specialisms. Each theme offers a choice of textual and visual starting points, briefs and stimuli.
- There is maximum flexibility in delivery: the theme and starting point for the Personal investigation is set by the teacher and learner and there is no set time restriction on preparation periods for the Externally set task.
- Learners may work entirely in non-digital media or entirely in digital media, or a combination of both.
- OCR's A Level in Art and Design is fully co-teachable with OCR's one component AS level qualification.

1d. How do I find out more information?

If already using OCR specifications you can contact us at: www.ocr.org.uk

If you are not already a registered OCR centre then you can find out more information on the benefits of becoming one at: www.ocr.org.uk

Want to find out more?

Ask a Subject Advisor:

Email: art&design@ocr.org.uk

Customer Contact Centre: 01223 553998

Teacher support: www.ocr.org.uk

News: www.ocr.org.uk

2 The specification overview

2a. Overview of A Level in Art and Design (H600-H606)

Learners must complete both components (01 and 02) to be awarded the OCR A Level in Art and Design.

Content Overview	Assessment Overview	
2 There are seven qualifications available for study. The available specialisms are: • Art, Craft and Design (H600) • Fine Art (H601) • Graphic Communication (H602) • Photography (H603) • Textile Design (H604) • Three-Dimensional Design (H605) • Critical and Contextual Studies (H606) Component 01: Personal investigation • Learners should produce two elements: (i) a portfolio of practical work showing their personal response to either a starting point, brief, scenario or stimulus, devised and provided by the learner or centre (ii) a related study: an extended response of a guided minimum of 1000 words. Component 02: Externally set task • The early release paper will be issued on 1 February and will provide learners with a number of themes, each with a range of written and visual starting points, briefs and stimuli. • A response should be based on one of these options.	Personal investigation (01) 120 marks non exam assessment (internally assessed and externally moderated)	60% of total A level
	Externally set task (02) 80 marks 15 hours non exam assessment (internally assessed and externally moderated)	40% of total A level

Withdrawal of A Level Art and Design: Critical and Contextual Studies (H606)

We are withdrawing A Level Art and Design: Critical and Contextual Studies (H606). We will continue to support and assess this qualification up to the conclusion of the final assessment series in **Summer 2028**.

The final first teach date for A Level Art and Design: Critical and Contextual Studies (H606) is **September 2026**. The final assessment opportunity for the H606 qualification will be **Summer 2028**. There is no resit opportunity.

2b. Content of A Level in Art and Design (H600-H606)

Component 01: Personal investigation

This component comprises two discrete but linked elements.

Element 1: Practical portfolio

This is a practical portfolio with supporting contextual research in which learners are expected to develop a personal response based on the centre-set or learner-set theme leading to a finished realisation(s) or outcome(s).

This portfolio will consist of a sustained project, theme or course of study. It may be presented in appropriate formats for the specialism and area of study chosen using, for example, sketchbooks, mounted sheets, maquettes, prototypes, digital presentations, animation, scale models or illustrated written work.

There is no restriction on the scale of work produced or the timeframe for undertaking the work but learners should carefully **select**, **organise** and **present** work to ensure that they provide evidence of meeting all four assessment objectives.

Learners must show they have:

- independently developed ideas through sustained and focused investigations in response to a given starting point
- produced material informed by contextual and other sources that informs the development of their practical work

- explored ideas, techniques or processes appropriate to their chosen specialism(s)
- recorded observations from sources relevant to intentions
- critically reviewed and refined their work as it progresses
- used their planning and preparation to produce coherent realisation(s)/outcome(s).

For the purposes of assessment, learners will provide evidence of all the assessment objectives through the **careful selection and presentation** of their work. The practical portfolio should be viewed as a whole and judgements regarding the extent to which all of the assessment objectives have been met should be made across the submission as a whole.

OCR-produced exemplar material is provided to help centres design and set their own starting points, briefs, scenarios and stimuli but this material must not be used for summative assessment. This is available on the [OCR website](#).

Element 2: Related study

Learners are required to establish through this written and, where appropriate, illustrated component, the related context in which their chosen practical portfolio exists.

2 This may be established by exploring the genre, subject matter, movement or historical framework of the overarching starting point, course of study or theme selected.

The aim of the related study is to enable learners to develop their ability to communicate their knowledge and understanding of art historical movements, genres, practitioners and artworks, considering the way that these change and evolve within chronological and other frameworks. It also builds their understanding of the relationship between society and art: art historical terms, concepts and issues; methods of researching, investigating and analysing; and how works are interpreted and evaluated.

The related study should be separate and clearly identifiable from the contextual research embedded in the development of the practical portfolio. Learners should also highlight their own work and clearly distinguish it from collected or transposed material.

Learners may produce the related study in an appropriate form of which the following are some examples: an illustrated essay, digital presentation/blog, illustrated study sheets or written report.

It is a requirement of the related study that all source material and research are listed and acknowledged in a bibliography and should be clearly identifiable in the work presented for assessment.

The two elements of the Personal investigation are marked using the relevant sections of the Personal investigation marking criteria in Section 3f.

Component 02: Externally set task

For this component, an early release paper will be despatched to centres based on estimated entries made and will also be available on the [OCR website](#) from 1 February.

This paper can be given to learners at the discretion of centres any time on or after 1 February in the year of certification. Centres may determine the amount of time for preparatory study prior to learners undertaking their 15-hour supervised time period.

The paper will give learners a choice of seven themes, each with a choice of written and/or visual starting points, briefs or stimuli. From this paper, learners are expected to choose **one** option for which they will generate an appropriate personal response for assessment.

Please see the Specimen Assessment Material for an example of the paper.

Planning and preparation

The amount of time given to learners for the preparation period should be determined by centres. Learners must be given a preparatory period during which they will research, plan and develop ideas for their own response to the option they have chosen. During this preparatory period teachers may give limited guidance. Guidance should be given to learners about availability and choice of materials, health and safety, avoidance of plagiarism and completion of work in accordance with specification requirements and procedures. However, it should be remembered that learners are required to reach their own judgements and conclusions and must work independently to produce their own personal response.

All work must be completed by the designated finishing time set by the centre. Dates and deadlines for preparatory work and the 15-hour supervised time must be set by centres in order to facilitate the completion of marking and internal standardisation by the OCR-set deadline. See Section 4: Admin: what you need to know.

Learners can continue to work on their preparatory work until the first period of supervised time commences. Learners must refer to their preparatory work during the supervised 15-hour period. Preparatory work should not be amended or developed further during or after the timetabled 15 hours supervised time. No additional work should be brought into the supervised sessions. Preparatory work and outcome(s) should be kept under secure conditions at all times when not in use and once the supervised time period is completed.

Realising intentions

Learners will have up to fifteen hours in which to independently realise their response(s). The 15-hour supervised time can be divided into a number of sessions and timetabled to suit the centre. At least one session should be at least 2–3 hours in duration. Centres should ensure that short sessions are avoided.

For regulations governing examinations, centres should consult the OCR website and the JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations.

Learners are required to provide evidence of all assessment objectives in response to their chosen starting point, brief or stimulus, within the 15-hour supervised time period. It is expected that during the supervised time period, learners will realise their intentions to an outcome(s).

All selected work produced for the component, including the research, planning and development work produced in the preparatory period, must be submitted for assessment.

The Externally set task is marked using the relevant marking criteria for the Externally set task in Section 3f.

2c. Core Content of A Level in Art and Design

The following core content outlines the scope, context, approaches, skills and knowledge and understanding which underpin all the endorsed Art and Design

specialisms within the suite of qualifications. This needs to be used in conjunction with the content provided for each specialism.

2

Scope and Context	• Learners must engage in integrated critical, practical and theoretical study in Art and Design. • Learners must demonstrate an ability to work within relevant frameworks and use a broad range of media. They must develop independence in relation to exploring their own ideas and lines of enquiry, refining intentions and producing personal outcomes. • Understanding context is a significant element in the process of building knowledge of the subject. It provides the relevant platform to help explore and understand ideas, feelings and meanings. • Learners should demonstrate an understanding of the context through critical evaluation in relation to research, written analysis and practical work. Contextual referencing should be evidenced through evaluation of historical and contemporary practitioners, creative industries, societies and cultures, popular culture, historical and current events. • Learners' critical and contextual understanding will be evidenced throughout all processes and outcomes. The form of critical and contextual understanding may be directed by the approach to media used in the specialism(s) taken but not exclusively so. • Learners must demonstrate, where applicable, an awareness of different roles, functions, audiences and consumers of art, craft and design. • The related study element must extend learners' understanding and knowledge of context. Learners are required to establish, through this written and illustrated element, the overarching principles of their specialist area. This may be established by exploring art theory, genre, subject matter, movement or historical framework. • Through the course of study, learners must understand the importance of the on-going development and refining process. The production of outcome(s) in the context of developing their skills and knowledge, as well as an awareness of the links between practical and written material, is necessary. • Learners are required to identify and acknowledge all sources consulted during their research which should be in the form of a bibliography of books, journals and websites.
Approaches	• Learners should be made aware of the broad range of media and approaches in which they can operate. • Learners may work in traditional media, digital media and emerging technologies or a combination within any specialism.

	• Critical and contextual understanding should be embedded throughout the course of study through all investigative processes, research and practical work. Learners should reflect critically and extract meaning from art, craft and design and use this to place their own work in a framework of advanced study. Approaches to critical and contextual understanding can be modified, either as a link and support to practical work, or research into the overarching context of art, craft and design. • Learners may use a range of approaches to demonstrate progression of ideas relevant to their chosen specialism: these may include sketchbooks, workbooks, journals, digital and audio presentations and associated software. • Learners may take an applied approach to any specialism, working to a brief and framework whilst developing an awareness of the approaches and activities that relate to the creative industries. An applied approach should reflect the current working practices, constraints, functions, audiences, consumers and clients within the professional art and design sector. • Drawing in the context of art and design is a core element of the practice of artists, crafts people and designers. The purpose of drawing is recording, communicating and visualising intentions, ideas and emotions. Furthermore, drawing may communicate emerging possibilities and potential lines of enquiry. There is a need for all learners to develop understanding and skills in forms of drawing that are appropriate to their chosen specialism(s) and the context in which the drawing is undertaken. • Drawing may take different forms. For example, it could be shown through the art of mark making as a way of recording the observed world. Other ways of drawing may include stitch and collage, storyboarding, and two- and three-dimensional designs and may be approached through traditional media or digital media and emerging technologies, or a combination of both. Mounted sheets, sketchbooks, illustrated journals and digital presentations are commonly used as an effective way of demonstrating drawing skills and the impact made on the creative directions chosen.
Core Skills	Learners are required to develop the skills to: • record experiences and observations, in a variety of ways using drawing or other appropriate visual forms; undertake research and gather, select and organise visual and other appropriate information • explore relevant resources; analyse, discuss and evaluate images, objects and artefacts; and make and record independent judgements • use knowledge and understanding of the work of others to develop and extend thinking and inform own work • generate and explore potential lines of enquiry using appropriate media and techniques • apply knowledge and understanding in making images and artefacts; review and modify work; plan and develop ideas in the light of their own and others' evaluations • organise, select and communicate ideas, solutions and responses, and present them in a range of visual, tactile and/or sensory forms.

Core Knowledge and Understanding

Learners are required to develop practical and theoretical knowledge and understanding of:

- relevant materials, processes, technologies and resources
- how ideas, feelings and meanings can be conveyed and interpreted in images and artefacts
- how images and artefacts relate to the time and place in which they were made and to their social and cultural contexts
- continuity and change in different genres, styles and traditions
- a working vocabulary and specialist terminology.

2c. Summary of Specialisms and related Areas of Study

OCR Art and Design specialisms	OCR Art and Design Areas of Study
Art, Craft and Design – Combined Specialisms (H600)	In Art, Craft and Design – Combined Specialisms learners must work in two or more specialisms from those listed in bold below. Learners may work in an area or areas of study within and/or across specialisms. • Fine Art: areas of study such as painting, printmaking or sculpture • Graphic Communication: areas of study such as illustration, packaging or advertising • Photography: areas of study such as traditional, digital or moving image • Textile Design: areas of study such as printed and digital textiles, fashion design or constructed textiles • Three-Dimensional Design: areas of study such as ceramics, product design or jewellery • Critical and Contextual Studies: areas of study such as art theory, artistic movements or architecture
Fine Art (H601)	Learners are required to choose one or more area(s) of study, such as: • Portraiture • Landscape • Still life • Human form • Abstraction • Experimental imagery • Narrative • Installation • Working in a genre
Graphic Communication (H602)	Learners are required to choose one or more area(s) of study, such as: • Image and typography • Illustration • Advertising • Layout design • Packaging • Editorial design • Experimental imagery • Signage • Abstract approaches

Photography (H603)	Learners are required to choose one or more area(s) of study, such as: • Portraiture • Landscape photography • Commercial photography • Still life photography • Documentary photography • Experimental imagery • Editorial photography • Photographic installation • The photographic process • Moving image • Animation
Textile Design (H604)	Learners are required to choose one or more area(s) of study, such as: • Garments/Fashion • Accessories • Soft furnishings • Printed and/or dyed textiles • Constructed textiles • Textile installation • Expressive textiles • Digital textiles
Three-Dimensional Design (H605)	Learners are required to choose one or more area(s) of study, such as: • Craft or commercial ceramics • Commercial sculptures or sculptural commissions • Commercial three-dimensional design, working for a client to create a three-dimensional item such as an item of jewellery • Design and/or construction for television, games or film • Stage, environmental or architectural design and/or construction • Experimental three-dimensional design (construction/montage/assemblage) • Body ornament (jewellery, fashion accessories, body painting and film or TV prosthetics) • Product design and realisation • Constructions in a range of materials

Critical and Contextual
Studies (H606)

Learners are required to choose one or more area(s) of study, such as:

- Fine art and sculpture
- Design
- Craft
- Art theory
- The human form
- Landscape and natural forms
- Still life and designed objects
- Architecture and the built environment
- Art movements, styles and genres
- Curating exhibitions
- Art management and art in the community
- Cultural representations within art and design
- Multimedia, emerging technologies and their use in art

2c(i). Content of Art, Craft and Design: Combined Specialisms (H600)

The content shown below must be used in conjunction with the Art and Design Core Content section.

Overview	• Art, Craft and Design – Combined Specialisms is a broad course exploring practical and critical/contextual work through a range of 2D and/or 3D processes and media. • Learners should be able to explore, research and acquire techniques and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of media. • Learners in Art, Craft and Design – Combined Specialisms are expected to produce a range of 2D and/or 3D work to evidence study of at least two specialisms in each component. Final outcomes for each component may be in one or a number of specialisms. • Learners may use traditional methods and/or digital techniques to produce work. • Learners should explore relevant images, artefacts and resources. • Drawing skills should be understood and developed as appropriate to the ways of recording and communicating intentions, ideas and emotions in the context of the chosen specialisms.
Specialisms and related Areas of Study	Learners are required to work in two or more specialisms from those listed below: • Fine Art: areas of study such as painting, printmaking or sculpture. • Graphic Communication: areas of study such as illustration, packaging or advertising. • Photography: areas of study such as traditional, digital or moving image. • Textile Design: areas of study such as printed and digital textiles, fashion design or fabric construction. • Three-Dimensional Design: areas of study such as ceramics, product design or jewellery. • Critical and Contextual Studies: areas of study such as art theory, artistic movements or architecture. Learners may choose one area of study and produce work appropriate to two or more specialisms such as portraiture in Fine Art and Photography. Alternatively, learners may choose different areas of study such as installation and signage from two or more specialisms and combine them in a complementary way. Techniques Learners following the Art, Craft and Design – Combined Specialisms course should explore techniques relevant to the chosen area(s) of study as outlined for each chosen specialism.

Skills	Learners will be expected to demonstrate skills, as defined in the Art and Design Core Content section of this specification, in the context of their chosen areas of art, craft and design. In addition, learners will be required to demonstrate skills relevant to their chosen two or more specialisms in the following: • understanding and applying space, rhythm and structure such as location, production or construction techniques • understanding and application of scale appropriate to the chosen specialism(s) • understanding and applying formal elements such as colour, line, tone, texture, shape and form • selecting, editing and developing ideas • using appropriate visual language and terminology appropriate to the specialism(s) • an ability to manipulate imagery such as transposition, composition and layer • using conventions and genres appropriate to the specialism(s) selected such as portraiture, landscape, studio ceramics or installation.
Knowledge and Understanding	Learners must use an appropriate range of processes and techniques using traditional and/or digital media, appropriate to their chosen specialism(s) enabling research, exploration and the creation of the final outcome(s). Learners will build and evidence an understanding of: • relevant technologies, materials, processes and resources • continuity and change in different genres, styles and traditions relevant to their chosen areas of specialism • how ideas, feelings and meanings can be conveyed and interpreted in images and artefacts • how images and artefacts relate to the time and place in which they were made and to their social and cultural context • a working vocabulary and specialist terminology which are relevant to their chosen specialism(s) or areas of study.

2c(ii). Content of Art and Design: Fine Art (H601)

The content shown below must be used in conjunction with the Art and Design Core Content section.

Overview	• Learners should be able to explore, research and acquire techniques and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of Fine Art media. • Learners should explore relevant images, artefacts and resources relating to Fine Art. Learners may use traditional methods and/or digital techniques to produce Fine Art work. • Learners in Fine Art are expected to demonstrate specialisation in particular materials, media or processes to allow for an appropriate depth of study. This can be achieved by working toward the extension and development of particular themes, ideas or issues. • Drawing skills should be understood and developed as appropriate to the ways of recording and communicating intentions, ideas and emotions in the context of Fine Art.
Areas of Study	Learners are required to work in one or more area(s) of Fine Art, such as those listed below. Combinations of these areas are also possible: • portraiture • landscape • still life • human form • abstraction • experimental imagery • narrative • installation • working in a genre. Techniques The following are some of the techniques available to learners in Fine Art: mark making, mixed-media, casting, glazing, collage, intaglio, photographic printing and digital manipulation.

Skills	Learners will be expected to demonstrate skills as defined in the Art and Design Core Content section of this specification, in the context of their chosen area(s) of Fine Art. In addition, learners will be required to demonstrate skills in all of the following: • understanding and the use of pictorial space and real space, composition, rhythm, scale and structure in Fine Art • understanding and application of scale appropriate to the chosen work and direction relevant to learners' intentions • understanding and applying formal elements such as colour, line, tone, texture, shape and form in relation to Fine Art • selecting, editing and developing ideas • using appropriate visual language and terminology within Fine Art • manipulating imagery • understanding and using relevant conventions and genres in Fine Art such as figurative, abstract and symbolic.
Knowledge and Understanding	Learners must use an appropriate range of processes and techniques using traditional and/or digital media, appropriate to the chosen subject area, enabling research, exploration and the creation of the final outcome(s). Learners will build and evidence an understanding of: • relevant technologies, materials, processes and resources • continuity and change in different genres, styles and traditions relevant to Fine Art and the chosen areas of study within this specialism • how ideas, feelings and meanings can be conveyed and interpreted in images and artefacts • how images and artefacts relate to the time and place in which they were made and to their social and cultural context • a working vocabulary and specialist terminology which are relevant to their chosen area(s) of study within Fine Art.

2c(iii). Content of Art and Design: Graphic Communication (H602)

The content shown below must be used in conjunction with the Art and Design Core Content section.

Overview	• Learners should be able to explore, research and acquire techniques and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of media specific to Graphic Communication. • Learners should explore relevant images, text, design and resources relating to Graphic Communication. Learners may use traditional methods such as drawing, printing and/or digital techniques to produce graphic images. • Learners in Graphic Communication are expected to demonstrate specialisation in particular materials, media or processes to allow for an appropriate depth of study. This can be achieved by working toward the extension and development of particular themes, ideas or issues. • Drawing skills should be understood and developed as appropriate to the ways of recording and communicating intentions, ideas and emotions in the context of Graphic Communication.
Areas of Study	Learners are required to work in one or more area(s) of Graphic Communication, such as those listed below. Combinations of these areas are also possible: • image and typography • illustration • advertising • layout design • packaging • editorial design • experimental imagery • signage • abstract approaches. Techniques The following are some of the techniques available to learners in Graphic Communication: image editing, digital manipulation, layout, presentational and editorial techniques, printing, mark making, collage and construction.

Skills	Learners will be expected to demonstrate skills as defined in the Art and Design Core Content section of this specification, in the context of their chosen area(s) of Graphic Communication. In addition, learners will be required to demonstrate skills in all of following: • applying and using composition in Graphic Communication • understanding and application of scale appropriate to the chosen work and direction relevant to learners' intentions • understanding and applying formal elements such as colour, tone, texture, shape and form in relation to Graphic Communication • selecting, editing and highlighting Graphic Communication imagery and text • using appropriate visual language and terminology within Graphic Communication • manipulating imagery • understanding and using relevant conventions and genres in Graphic Communication.
Knowledge and Understanding	Learners must use an appropriate range of processes and techniques using traditional and/or digital media, appropriate to the chosen subject area, enabling research, exploration and the creation of the final outcome(s). Learners will build and evidence an understanding of: • relevant technologies, materials, processes and resources • continuity and change in different genres, styles and traditions relevant to Graphic Communication and the chosen areas of study within this specialism • how ideas, feelings and meanings can be conveyed and interpreted in images and artefacts • how images and artefacts relate to the time and place in which they were made and to their social and cultural context • a working vocabulary and specialist terminology which are relevant to their chosen area(s) of study.

2c(iv). Content of Art and Design: Photography (H603)

The content shown below must be used in conjunction with the Art and Design Core Content section.

Overview	• Learners should be able to explore, research and acquire techniques and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of photographic media. • Learners should explore relevant images, artefacts and resources relating to traditional and/or digital photography. Learners may use traditional methods such as photographic film and/or digital techniques to produce images. • Learners in Photography are expected to demonstrate specialisation in particular media or processes to allow an appropriate depth of study. This can be achieved by working toward the extension and development of particular themes, ideas or issues. • Drawing skills should be understood and developed as appropriate to the ways of recording and communicating intentions, ideas and emotions in the context of Photography.
Areas of Study	Learners are required to work in one or more area(s) of Photography, such as those listed below. Combinations of these areas are also possible: • portraiture • landscape photography • commercial photography • still-life photography • documentary photography • experimental imagery • editorial photography • photographic installation • the photographic process • moving image • animation Techniques The following are some of the techniques available to learners in Photography: traditional darkroom technology; printing and developing films; digital technology; the use of camera equipment and lenses; lighting and exposure techniques; moving image and animation; alternative art-based printing such as screen printing; alternative chemical print processes such as liquid emulsion, toning and types of paper.

Skills	Learners will be expected to demonstrate skills as defined in the Art and Design core content section of this specification, in the context of their chosen area(s) of Photography. In addition, learners will be required to demonstrate skills in all of the following: • applying and using composition in Photography • understanding and application of scale appropriate to the chosen work and direction relevant to learners' intentions • understanding and applying formal elements such as colour, tone, texture, shape and form in relation to Photography • selecting, editing and highlighting photographic images • using appropriate visual language and terminology within Photography • manipulating imagery • understanding and using relevant conventions and genres in Photography.
Knowledge and Understanding	Learners must use an appropriate range of processes and techniques using traditional and/or digital media, appropriate to the chosen subject area enabling research, exploration and the creation of the final outcome(s). Learners will build and evidence an understanding of: • relevant technologies, materials, processes and resources • continuity and change in different genres, styles and traditions relevant to Photography and the chosen areas of study within this specialism • how ideas, feelings and meanings can be conveyed and interpreted in images and artefacts • how images and artefacts relate to the time and place in which they were made and to their social and cultural context • a working vocabulary and specialist terminology which are relevant to their chosen area(s) of study.

2c(v). Content of Art and Design: Textile Design (H604)

The content shown below must be used in conjunction with the Art and Design Core Content section.

Overview	• Learners should be able to explore, research and acquire techniques and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of textiles media. • Learners should explore relevant images, artefacts and resources relating to Textile Design. Learners may use methods such as textile design, print and digital techniques to produce outcomes in visual, tactile and/or sensory forms. • Learners in Textile Design are expected to demonstrate specialisation in particular media or processes to an appropriate depth of study. This can be achieved by working toward the extension and development of particular themes, ideas or issues. • An important focus is on learners recording experiences and observations in stitch, textiles illustration, materials sampling and other forms. • Drawing skills should be understood and developed as appropriate to the ways of recording and communicating intentions, ideas and emotions in the context of Textile Design.
Areas of Study	Learners are required to work in one or more area(s) of Textile Design, such as those listed below. Combinations of these areas are also possible: • garments/fashion • accessories • soft furnishings • printed and/or dyed textiles • constructed textiles • textile installation • expressive textiles • digital textiles. Techniques The following are some of the techniques available to learners in Textile Design: fabric printing, mono-printing, relief printing, screen printing, tie-dye, batik, spraying, transfer, fabric construction, stitching, appliqué, patchwork, padding, quilting, embroidery, weaving, knitting, felting and mixed-media applications.

Skills	Learners will be expected to demonstrate skills as defined in the Art and Design Core Content section of this specification, in the context of their chosen area(s) of Textile Design. In addition, learners will be required to demonstrate skills in all of the following: • recording experiences and observations, using drawing, illustration, stitch, materials or other appropriate forms • undertake research and gather, select and organise a range of appropriate materials and information • applying and using composition in textiles • understanding and application of scale appropriate to the chosen work and direction relevant to learner intention • understanding and applying formal elements such as colour, tone, texture, shape and form in relation to Textile Design • using appropriate visual language and terminology within Textile Design • appreciating the relationship of form and function of textiles, such as garments, accessories and soft furnishings and, where applicable, the constraints of working to a brief • understanding and using relevant conventions and genres in Textile Design.
Knowledge and Understanding	Learners must use an appropriate range of processes and techniques using traditional and/or digital media, appropriate to the chosen subject area, enabling research, exploration and the creation of the final outcome(s). Learners will build and evidence an understanding of: • relevant research, context, technologies, materials, processes and resources • continuity and change in different genres, styles and traditions relevant to Textile Design and the chosen areas of study within this specialism • a range of techniques appropriate to the area of study they are working within • how ideas, feelings and meanings can be conveyed and interpreted in images and artefacts • how images and artefacts relate to the time and place in which they were made and to their social and cultural context • a working vocabulary and specialist terminology which are relevant to their chosen area(s) of study.

2c(vi). Content of Art and Design: Three-Dimensional Design (H605)

The content shown below must be used in conjunction with the Art and Design Core Content section.

Overview	• Learners should be able to explore, research and acquire techniques and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of approaches specific to Three-Dimensional Design. • Learners should explore relevant images, text, design processes and resources relating to Three-Dimensional Design. • Learners should demonstrate how they can problem solve by designing or creating products which have a decorative or functional role. They may include in their work one-off experimental pieces, traditional crafts, small batch production or industrial design for mass consumption. Learners should also demonstrate their understanding of processes. • Learners in Three-Dimensional Design are expected to demonstrate specialisation in particular media or processes to an appropriate depth of study. This can be achieved by working toward the extension and development of particular themes, ideas or issues. • Drawing skills should be understood and developed as appropriate to the ways of recording and communicating intentions, ideas and emotions in the context of Three-Dimensional Design.
Areas of Study	Learners are required to work in one or more area(s) of Three-Dimensional Design, such as those listed below. Combinations of these areas are also possible: • craft or commercial ceramics • commercial sculpture or sculptural commissions • commercial Three-Dimensional Design, working for a client to create a three-dimensional item, such as an item of jewellery • design and/or construction for television, games or film • stage, environmental or architectural design and/or construction • experimental Three-Dimensional Design (construction/montage/ assemblage) • body ornament (jewellery, fashion accessories, body painting and film or TV prosthetics) • product design and realisation • constructions in a range of materials. Techniques The following are some of the techniques available to learners in Three-Dimensional Design: drawing, modelling, casting, construction, carving, metal working, computer-aided design, welding, assemblage, laser cutting, 3D printing, ceramics and mixed-media applications.

Skills	Learners will be expected to demonstrate skills as defined in the Art and Design Core Content section of this specification, in the context of their chosen area(s) of Three-Dimensional Design. In addition, learners will be required to demonstrate skills in all of the following: • selecting and using materials either discretely or in combination, such as metal, foam board, card, glass, mosaic, ceramic, fibre and wood • understanding and application of scale appropriate to the chosen work and direction relevant to learner intention • devising spatial solutions to the various constraints presented by a product, location or environment • using appropriate visual language and terminology within Three-Dimensional Design • problem solving in three dimensions by defining role, function, material, audience and/or client relevant to the context and parameters of their work • understanding and using relevant conventions, production methods and genres in Three-Dimensional Design.
Knowledge and Understanding	Learners must use an appropriate range of processes and techniques using traditional and/or digital media, appropriate to the chosen subject area, enabling research, exploration and the creation of the final outcome(s). Learners will build and evidence an understanding of: • relevant technologies, materials, processes and resources • continuity and change in different genres, styles and traditions relevant to Three-Dimensional Design and the chosen areas of study within this specialism • how ideas, feelings and meanings can be conveyed and interpreted in images, goods and artefacts • how images, goods and artefacts relate to the time and place in which they were made and to their social and cultural context • a working vocabulary and specialist terminology which are relevant to their chosen area(s) of study.

2c(vii). Content of Art and Design: Critical and Contextual Studies (H606)

The content shown below must be used in conjunction with the Art and Design Core Content section.

Overview	• Learners should be able to explore, research and analyse techniques and art, craft and design practices, developing their skills, knowledge and understanding in practical and written elements specific to Critical and Contextual Study. It is anticipated that the visual and textual analysis of art, craft and design work undertaken will be the central element in this specialism. • Learners should show how they can demonstrate critical and contextual skills through researching, analysing and building understanding of one or more areas of study. An important focus is on the learner's ability to use detailed written and visual analysis when conducting research. • Learners should demonstrate evidence of research and first-hand experience of works of art, craft and/or design. • Learners must demonstrate analysis of a range of relevant works undertaken from one or more of the denoted areas of study, including supporting critical analysis using appropriate terminology. • Learners must demonstrate an integrated and relevant portfolio of practical artwork. • Drawing skills should be understood and developed as appropriate to the ways of recording and communicating intentions, ideas and emotions in the context of Critical and Contextual Studies.
Areas of Study	Learners are required to work in one or more area(s) of Critical and Contextual Study, such as those listed below. Combinations of these areas are also possible: • fine art and sculpture • design • craft • art theory • the human form • landscape and natural forms • still life and designed objects • architecture and the built environment • art movements, styles and genres • curating exhibitions • art management and art in the community • cultural representations within art and design • multi-media, emerging technologies and their use in art. Techniques The following are some of the techniques available to Critical and Contextual Studies learners: extended written analysis to be accompanied by relevant visual research; collection and refinement of research taken from relevant sources; comparative analysis in the differentiation between styles, genres, subject matter and historical cultures; practical techniques as appropriate to the areas of study.

Skills	Learners will be expected to demonstrate skills as defined in the Art and Design Core Content section of this specification, in the context of their chosen area(s) of Critical and Contextual Studies. In addition, learners will be required to demonstrate skills in all of the following: • selecting and using materials such as web-based research, gallery or site visits, books, journals, and other relevant resources • selecting, interpreting and scrutinising research material with the use of relevant subject terminology • understanding and using conventions when interpreting the impact/effect of social, religious and cultural contexts and local and global trends • undertaking critical analysis to ascertain and discuss appropriate historical, social and political contexts • analysing materials and techniques used by artists such as application of formal skills and construction techniques.
Knowledge and Understanding	Learners must use an appropriate range of processes and techniques using traditional and/or digital media, appropriate to the chosen subject area enabling research, exploration and the creation of final outcome(s) to include critical written and visual analysis. Learners will build and evidence an understanding of: • relevant technologies, materials, processes and resources • continuity and change in different genres, styles and traditions relevant to Critical and Contextual Studies and the chosen areas of study within this specialism • how ideas, feelings and meanings can be conveyed and interpreted in images and artefacts • how images and artefacts relate to the time and place in which they were made and to their social and cultural context • a working vocabulary and specialist terminology which are relevant to their chosen area(s) of study.

2d. Prior knowledge, learning and progression

Learners in England who are beginning an A level course are likely to have followed a Key Stage 4 programme of study in Art and Design or equivalent.

2 The specification aims to support a learner's progression path. Although no prior knowledge of the subject is required, it is intended to form part of an educational continuum that progresses from Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 in the National Curriculum for Art. It will build on, but does not depend on, the knowledge, understanding and skills specified for GCSE Art and Design. It will support progression from GCE into Higher Education, Further Education, training or employment.

It also aims to support those learners who will study subjects or take up careers for which an art and design background is relevant or for subjects or careers where the transferable skills gained in this specification can be utilised.

It may be used by teachers, employers, colleges and universities for selection purposes.

3 Assessment of OCR A Level in Art and Design

3a. Forms of assessment

Component 01: Personal investigation

Component 01 is the Personal investigation. Learners must produce two elements in response to a centre- or learner-set starting point, brief, scenario or stimulus: a portfolio of practical work and a related study.

This component is a non exam assessment. It is internally marked and externally moderated using the marking criteria in Section 3f. This component is marked out of 120 marks and contributes 60% to the overall weighting of OCR's Art and Design A Level.

The related study should consist of a guided minimum of 1000 words of extended written response.

Please refer to Section 2b of this specification for further detail.

Component 02: Externally set task

Component 02 is the Externally set task. The early release paper will be issued on **1 February** in the year of certification. It will provide learners with a range of themes each with written and visual starting points, a brief and stimuli. From these, one option must be selected by the learner on which they must base their personal response.

Centres will allow learners a set period of time, at their discretion, to prepare for the Externally set task timetabled 15-hour supervised time.

The Externally set task is a non exam assessment. It is internally marked and externally moderated using the marking criteria in Section 3f. This component is marked out of 80 marks and contributes 40% to the overall weighting of OCR's Art and Design A Level.

Please refer to Section 2b of this specification for further detail.

3b. Assessment objectives (AO)

There are four assessment objectives in OCR's A Level in Art and Design.

These are detailed in the table below.

Learners are expected to demonstrate their ability to:

	Assessment Objective
AO1	Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding.
AO2	Explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining ideas as work develops.
AO3	Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, reflecting critically on work and progress.
AO4	Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements.

AO weightings in A Level in Art and Design

The relationship between the assessment objectives and the components is shown in the following table:

Component	% of A level				
	AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	Total
Personal investigation (01)	15	15	15	15	60
Externally set task (02)	10	10	10	10	40
	25	25	25	25	100

3c. Total qualification time

Total qualification time (TQT) is the total amount of time, in hours, expected to be spent by a learner to achieve a qualification. It includes both guided learning hours and hours spent in preparation, study, and

assessment. The total qualification time for A Level in Art and Design is 360 hours. The total guided learning time is 360 hours.

3d. Qualification availability outside of England

This qualification is available in England. For Wales and Northern Ireland please check the Qualifications in Wales Portal (QIW) or the Northern Ireland Department of Education Performance Measures /

Northern Ireland Entitlement Framework Qualifications Accreditation Number (NIEFQAN) list to see current availability.

3e. Language

This qualification is available in English only. All assessment materials are available in English only and all candidate work must be in English.

3f. Assessment availability

There will be:

- one examination series available each year in May/June to all learners.

This specification will be certificated from the June 2017 examination series onwards.

3g. Retaking the qualification

Learners can retake the qualification as many times as they wish. Learners can choose to either retake either of the non-exam assessment (NEA) components or carry forward (re-use) one of their most recent results (see Section 4c).

The final assessment opportunity for A Level Art and Design: Critical and Contextual Studies (H606) will be **Summer 2028**. There is no resit opportunity.

3h. Assessment of extended responses

Within A Level in Art and Design a learner has the opportunity to demonstrate the ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning through an extended response within the context of the creative process. This reflects their ability to develop, refine and record their ideas and processes, from their intention(s) through to realisation(s), whilst demonstrating their critical and contextual understanding.

The related study element within the Personal investigation provides learners with a further opportunity to demonstrate their ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning and marks for any extended response are integrated into the marking criteria.

3i. Non exam assessment – Marking criteria

All components for OCR's A Level in Art and Design are internally marked and externally moderated.

Learners' work should be marked by the centre assessor to the marking criteria in the relevant table, using a 'best-fit' approach.

Marking should be positive, rewarding achievement rather than penalising failure or omissions. The awarding of marks must be directly related to the marking criteria.

Teachers should use their professional judgement in selecting band descriptors that best describe the work of the learner to place them in the appropriate band for each assessment objective strand.

To select the most appropriate mark in the band descriptor, teachers should use the following guidance:

- where the learner's work convincingly meets the statement, the highest mark should be awarded
- where the learner's work adequately meets the statement, the most appropriate mark in the middle of the range should be awarded
- where the learner's work just meets the statement, the lowest mark should be awarded.

Teachers should use the full range of marks available to them and award full marks in any band for work which fully meets that descriptor.

There should be clear evidence that work has been attempted and some work produced. If a learner submits no work for a component then the learner should be indicated as being absent from that component. If a learner completes any work at all for the component then the work should be assessed according to the marking criteria and the appropriate mark awarded, which may be zero.

Teachers should ensure that the standard applied in marking a learner's work in each specialism within the Art, Craft and Design: Combined Specialism course is the same standard as that expected and assessed for a learner following an individual specialist title, e.g. Fine Art.

Work submitted for the AS level component should reflect the standard expected at the end of the first year of an A level course of study.

Work submitted for the A level components should reflect the standard expected for a learner after a full A level course of study. The work presented for assessment in an A level qualification shows greater depth of study than that presented for an AS qualification. This might, for example, be achieved by:

- a greater specialisation in a particular medium or process
- extended development of particular themes, ideas or issues
- further theoretical research and increased requirement to demonstrate understanding through integrated practical and written forms, and other means of communication
- more rigorous exploration of an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary approach.

To ensure teachers are marking to the correct standard, teachers who are delivering A level and/or AS level should ensure they use the A level and AS level marking criteria, performance descriptors and reference exemplar work for each level. These are available on the OCR website, www.ocr.org.uk.

Centres must complete the 'Non-exam assessment centre marks form' and submit this to OCR via the moderator prior to moderation. This form is available on the OCR website, www.ocr.org.uk.

For Component 01 (Personal investigation) there are two separate sets of marks to be awarded.

For the practical portfolio a mark for each Assessment Objective should be awarded out of maximum of 24 marks.

For the related study, a single mark should be awarded, out of a maximum of 24 marks, using the holistic descriptors provided. Each Assessment Objective has been given equal weight in each holistic descriptor and also appropriately rewards learners for the quality of their extended response.

These five marks should be recorded on the Assessment Record Sheet provided and totalled to give a final mark out of a maximum of 120 for this component.

For Component 02 (Externally set task) a mark for each Assessment Objective should be awarded out of a maximum of 20 marks.

These four marks should be recorded on the Assessment Record Sheet found on the [OCR website](http://www.ocr.org.uk), and totalled to give a final mark out of a maximum of 80 marks for this component.

OCR will provide exemplification through learner work which will help to clarify the level of achievement the internal assessors should be looking for when awarding marks.

H600/01-H606/01 Personal investigation: practical portfolio and related study – Marking criteria (last assessment 2027)

Level	Element	AO1: DEVELOP	AO2: EXPLORE	AO3: RECORD	AO4: PRESENT
1	Practical portfolio	Ideas are simplistic with minimal reference to contextual or other sources, with evidence of unfocused investigation. Demonstrates simplistic analysis and critical understanding. 1–4	Simple explorations with minimal ability to select resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Minimal evidence of review and refinement of work as it develops. 1–4	Simple recording of ideas showing minimal links to any deliberate intention. Simplistic ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 1–4	A personal response with simplistic realisation of intentions. Connections between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are minimal and superficial. 1–4
	Related study	Simplistic ability to communicate ideas, with minimal exploration of critical and contextual understanding. Some inaccuracy and incoherence in recording when using specialist language and vocabulary are demonstrated. Simplistic knowledge and understanding are shown when presenting the study and realising intentions. Connections, where appropriate, between visual and other elements are minimal. 1–4			
2	Practical portfolio	Ideas are developed with evidence of some links to contextual or other sources, with evidence of basic investigation. Demonstrates basic analysis and critical understanding. 5–8	Evidence of basic exploration and some ability to select resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Review of work is evident as it develops with some refinement made. 5–8	Basic recording of ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions. Basic ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 5–8	A personal response with some meaning and a basic realisation of intentions. Connections between visual or other elements, where appropriate, are limited. 5–8
	Related study	Limited coherence when communicating ideas, with some exploration and limited evidence of critical and contextual understanding. Limited accuracy and partially structured recording when using specialist language and vocabulary are demonstrated. Some evidence of knowledge and understanding is shown when presenting the study and realising intentions. Connections, where appropriate, between visual and other elements are limited. 5–8			
3	Practical portfolio	Ideas are developed with links to appropriate contextual or other sources, with some relevant and effective investigation. Demonstrates relevant and effective analysis and critical understanding. 9–12	Evidence of appropriate exploration and ability to select relevant resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Review of work demonstrates effective refinement as work develops. 9–12	Effective and appropriate recording of ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions. Effective ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 9–12	A personal and meaningful response with appropriate and realised links to intentions. Connections between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are effectively developed. 9–12
	Related study	Effective communication of ideas, with appropriate exploration and clear evidence of critical and contextual understanding. Accurate and mainly structured recording when using specialist language and vocabulary are demonstrated. Evidence of knowledge and some understanding is shown when presenting the study and realising intentions. Connections, where appropriate, between visual and other elements are appropriately developed. 9–12			

4	Practical portfolio	Ideas are well-developed, reflecting influences of relevant research of contextual and other sources, with evidence of focused and detailed investigation. Demonstrates detailed and informed analysis and critical understanding. 13–16	Detailed and informed exploration and selection of relevant resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Detailed and informed review and refinement of work as it develops. 13–16	Detailed and informed recording of ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions. Purposeful ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 13–16	A personal and meaningful response with well-developed and purposeful links to intentions. Connections made between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are well developed and purposeful. 13–16
	Related study	Detailed communication of ideas with informed exploration, refinement and critical and contextual understanding. Purposeful use of specialist language and vocabulary in recording is demonstrated. Evidence of knowledge and well-developed understanding is shown when presenting the study and realising intentions. Connections, where appropriate, between visual and other elements are well developed and purposeful. 13–16			
5	Practical portfolio	Informed ideas are fully developed, with in-depth reflection of influences of contextual and other sources, with evidence of focused and insightful investigation. Demonstrates fully developed and insightful analysis and critical understanding. 17–20	In-depth exploration and well-considered selection of relevant resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Fully developed and insightful review and refinement of work as it develops. 17–20	In-depth and well-considered recording of ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions. Insightful ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 17–20	A personal and meaningful response with fully developed and insightful realisation of intentions. Connections made between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are fully developed and insightful. 17–20
	Related study	Well-considered communication of ideas with insightful exploration, refinement and critical and contextual understanding. Extensive and well-considered use of specialist language and vocabulary in recording is demonstrated. A high level of structured and reasoned knowledge and understanding is shown when presenting the study and realising intentions. Connections, where appropriate, between visual and other elements are fully developed and insightful. 17–20			
6	Practical portfolio	Informed ideas are fully and maturely developed, reflecting a sophisticated response to contextual and other sources, with evidence of mature and sustained investigation. Demonstrates sophisticated and sustained analysis and critical understanding. 21–24	Sophisticated and sustained exploration and mature selection of relevant resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Sophisticated and sustained review and refinement of work as it develops. 21–24	Sophisticated and mature recording of ideas, observations and insights to reflect intentions. Sophisticated ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 21–24	A personal and meaningful response showing sophisticated and mature realisation of intentions. Connections made between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are sophisticated and mature. 21–24
	Related study	Sophisticated and sustained communication of ideas with thorough exploration, refinement and excellent critical and contextual understanding. Extensive and sophisticated handling of specialist language and vocabulary in recording is demonstrated. An accomplished level of structured and reasoned knowledge and understanding is shown when presenting the study and realising intentions. Connections, where appropriate, between visual and other elements are sophisticated. 21–24			

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit.

H600/02-H606/02 Externally set task – Marking criteria (last assessment 2027)

Level	AO1: DEVELOP	AO2: EXPLORE	AO3: RECORD	AO4: PRESENT
1	Ideas are simplistic with minimal reference to contextual or other sources, with evidence of uneven or unfocused investigation. Demonstrates simplistic analysis and critical understanding. 1–4	Simple exploration with minimal ability to select resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Minimal evidence of review and refinement of work as it develops. 1–4	Simple recording of ideas with limited observations showing minimal links to any deliberate intentions. Simplistic ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 1–4	A personal response with simplistic realisation of intentions. Connections between visual and other elements, where appropriate are minimal and superficial. 1–4
2	Ideas are developed with evidence of some links to contextual or other sources, with evidence of basic investigation. Demonstrates basic analysis and critical understanding. 5–7	Evidence of basic exploration and some ability to select resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Review of work is evident as it develops with some refinement made. 5–7	Basic recording of ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions. Basic ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 5–7	A personal response with some meaning and a basic realisation of intentions. Connections between visual or other elements, where appropriate, are limited. 5–7
3	Ideas are developed with links to appropriate contextual or other sources, with some relevant and effective investigation. Demonstrates relevant and effective analysis and critical understanding. 8–10	Evidence of appropriate exploration and ability to select relevant resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Review of work demonstrates effective refinements as work develops. 8–10	Effective and appropriate recording of ideas, observations and insights, relevant to intentions. Effective ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 8–10	A personal and meaningful response with appropriate and realised links to intentions. Connections between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are effectively developed. 8–10

4	Ideas are well developed, reflecting influences of relevant research of contextual and other sources, with evidence of focused and detailed investigation. Demonstrates detailed and informed analysis and critical understanding. 11–13	Detailed and informed exploration and selection of relevant resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Detailed and informed review and refinement of work as it develops. 11–13	Detailed and informed recording of ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions. Purposeful ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 11–13	A personal and meaningful response with well developed and purposeful links to intentions. Connections made between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are well-developed and purposeful. 11–13
5	Informed ideas are fully developed, with in-depth reflection of influences of contextual and other sources, with evidence of focused and insightful investigation. Demonstrates fully developed and insightful analysis and critical understanding. 14–16	In-depth exploration and well-considered selection of relevant resources, media, materials techniques and processes. Fully developed and insightful review and refinement of work as it develops. 14–16	In-depth and well-considered recording of ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions. Insightful ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 14–16	A personal and meaningful response with fully developed and insightful realisation of intentions. Connections made between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are fully developed and insightful. 14–16
6	Informed ideas are fully and maturely developed, reflecting a sophisticated response to contextual and other sources, with evidence of mature and sustained investigation. Demonstrates sophisticated and sustained analysis and critical understanding. 17–20	Sophisticated and sustained exploration and mature selection of relevant resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Sophisticated and sustained review and refinement of work as it develops. 17–20	Sophisticated and mature recording of ideas, observations and insights to reflect intentions. Sophisticated ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 17–20	A personal and meaningful response showing sophisticated and mature realisation of intentions. Connections made between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are sophisticated and mature. 17–20

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit.

3j. Synoptic assessment

OCR's A Level in Art and Design is designed to have a fully synoptic approach to teaching and learning, engaging the learner in an integrated critical, practical and theoretical study of Art and Design.

Throughout this course of study learners will engage with the creative process, which is spiral in nature and will allow learners to develop, explore, record and realise their intentions.

They will acquire a range of critical and contextual knowledge, understanding and skills as they review and refine work as it progresses. By its very nature this creative process provides truly synoptic learning.

Synoptic assessment tests the learners' understanding of the connections between different elements of Art and Design. It involves the explicit drawing together of knowledge, understanding and skills of different aspects of the A level course.

The Assessment Objectives reflect the holistic creative process learners will engage in and work together in an integrated spiral approach. To this end each component targets each of the Assessment Objectives in their entirety and/or permits learners to demonstrate them in their entirety.

The scope and flexibility of the tasks and outcome choices available to learners allow learners to demonstrate their performance through differentiation by outcome across the full ability range.

The emphasis of synoptic assessment is to encourage the understanding of Art, Craft and Design as a discipline.

3

3k. Calculating qualification results

A learner's overall qualification grade for A Level in Art and Design will be calculated by adding together their marks from the two components taken to give their total weighted mark.

This mark will then be compared to the qualification level grade boundaries for the qualification(s) taken by the learner and for the relevant exam series to determine the learner's overall qualification grade.

4 Admin: what you need to know

The information in this section is designed to give an overview of the processes involved in administering this qualification so that you can speak to your exams officer. All of the following processes require you to submit something to OCR by a specific deadline.

More information about the processes and deadlines involved at each stage of the assessment cycle can be found in the Administration area of the OCR website.

OCR's Admin overview is available on the OCR website at www.ocr.org.uk/administration.

4a. Pre-assessment

Estimated entries

Estimated entries are your best projection of the number of learners who will be entered for a qualification in a particular series.

Estimated entries should be submitted to OCR by the specified deadline. They are free and do not commit your centre in any way.

Estimated entries are particularly important for Art and Design so it is essential that these are submitted to OCR on time. The early release paper for Component 02, the Externally set task, will be despatched to your centre on the basis of your estimated entries.

Final entries

Final entries provide OCR with detailed data for each learner, showing each assessment to be taken. It is essential that you use the correct entry code, considering the relevant entry rules.

Final entries must be submitted to OCR by the published deadlines or late entry fees will apply.

All learners taking A Level in Art and Design must be entered for one of the entry codes on the following page.

4

Entry code	Qualification Title	Code	Components
H600	Art, Craft and Design	01	Art, Craft and Design: Personal investigation
		02	Art, Craft and Design: Externally set task
H601	Art and Design: Fine Art	01	Fine Art: Personal investigation
		02	Fine Art: Externally set task
H602	Art and Design: Graphic Communication	01	Graphic Communication: Personal investigation
		02	Graphic Communication: Externally set task
H603	Art and Design: Photography	01	Photography: Personal investigation
		02	Photography: Externally set task
H604	Art and Design: Textile Design	01	Textile Design: Personal investigation
		02	Textile Design: Externally set task
H605	Art and Design: Three-Dimensional Design	01	Three-Dimensional Design: Personal investigation
		02	Three-Dimensional Design: Externally set task
H606	Art and Design: Critical and Contextual Studies	01	Critical and Contextual Studies: Personal investigation
		02	Critical and Contextual Studies: Externally set task

For all carry forward and moderated upload codes, please see appendices 5c and 5d.

The final assessment opportunity for A Level Art and Design: Critical and Contextual Studies (H606) will be **Summer 2028**. There is no resit opportunity.

Collecting evidence of student performance to ensure resilience in the qualifications system

Regulators have published guidance on collecting evidence of student performance as part of long-term contingency arrangements to improve the resilience of the qualifications system. You should review and consider this guidance when delivering this qualification to students at your centre.

For more detailed information on collecting evidence of student performance please visit our website at: <https://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/general-qualifications/assessment/>

4b. Accessibility and special consideration

Reasonable adjustments and access arrangements allow learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do, without changing the demands of the assessment. Applications for these should be made before the examination series. Detailed information about eligibility for access arrangements can be found in the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*.

Special consideration is a post-assessment adjustment to marks or grades to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time the assessment was taken.

Detailed information about eligibility for special consideration can be found in the JCQ publication *A guide to the special consideration process*.

4c. Non exam assessment

4

Regulations governing arrangements for internal assessments are contained in the JCQ *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments*.

Head of Centre Annual Declaration

The Head of Centre is required to provide a declaration to the JCQ as part of the annual NCN update, conducted in the autumn term, to confirm that the centre is meeting all of the requirements detailed in the specification.

Any failure by a centre to provide the Head of Centre Annual Declaration will result in your centre status being suspended and could lead to the withdrawal of our approval for you to operate as a centre.

Authentication of learner's work

Centres must declare that the work submitted for assessment is the learner's own by completing a centre authentication form (CCS160). This information must be retained at the centre and be available on request to either OCR or the JCQ centre inspection service.

It must be kept until the deadline has passed for centres to submit a review of results. Once this deadline has passed and centres have not requested a review, this evidence can be destroyed.

Private candidates

Private candidates may enter for OCR assessments.

A private candidate is someone who pursues a course of study independently but takes an examination or assessment at an approved examination centre. A private candidate may be a part-time student, someone taking a distance learning course, or someone being tutored privately. They must be based in the UK.

OCR's A Level in Art and Design requires learners to complete non-examined assessment. This is an

essential part of the course and will allow learners to develop skills for further study or employment.

Private candidates need to contact OCR approved centres to establish whether they are prepared to host them as a private candidate. The centre may charge for this facility and OCR recommends that the arrangement is made early in the course.

Further guidance for private candidates may be found on the OCR website: <http://www.ocr.org.uk>

Internal standardisation

For A Level in Art and Design, centres should internally standardise across all specialisms, as well as across teaching groups within a specialism, to ensure a consistent understanding and application of the common marking criteria.

Centres must carry out internal standardisation to ensure that marks awarded by different teachers are accurate and consistent across all learners entered for the component from that centre.

Moderation

The purpose of moderation is to bring the marking of internally-assessed components in all participating centres to an agreed standard. This is achieved by checking samples of each centre's marking of learners' work. A separate sample will be required for each component of each specialism entered.

Following internal standardisation, centres submit marks to OCR and the moderator using the appropriate 'Non exam assessment centre marks form', available on the OCR website, www.ocr.org.uk.

Once marks have been submitted to OCR and your moderator, centres will receive a moderation sample request. Samples will include work from across the range of attainment of the learners' work. A separate sample will be required for each component of each qualification entered.

The moderation process will be by centre visit, or, from September 2026, via a digital moderation route including consortia moderation.

Your moderator will contact you to make arrangements for the visit and instruct you on the work to be displayed.

Centres will receive the outcome of moderation when the provisional results are issued. This will include:

Moderation Adjustments Report – listing any scaling that has been applied to internally-assessed components.

Moderator Report to Centres – a brief report by the moderator on the internal assessment of learners' work per component.

Digital Moderation Route (from September 2026)

Centres will have two moderation options for each qualification: visiting moderation or digital moderation. The digital route is designed to support centres already working digitally and those transitioning to digital delivery. The following principles apply:

Centres may opt for digital moderation only if all candidate work for a qualification is produced digitally. If there is a mix of physical and digital work across specialisms, visiting moderation applies.

When a centre offers several specialist pathways, the format of portfolios—whether physical or digital—will depend on the specific requirements of each course. Consequently, there will typically be a combination of both physical and digital work across different specialisms at the same centre, making visiting moderation necessary.

Only work created digitally by candidates is eligible for digital submission. Centres are not required to submit digitally; traditional moderation remains available for those teaching physical media (e.g., traditional photography).

If all candidates in a centre for all specialisms offered for a given course produce work digitally, that centre may opt for either a traditional visiting moderation or the new digital submission option.

If a centre has candidates producing a mix of digital and physical work across one or multiple specialisms, the traditional visiting moderation process will apply.

Carrying forward non-exam assessment (NEA)

Learners who are retaking the qualification can choose to either retake the non-exam assessment – or carry forward their most recent result for that component.

To carry forward the NEA component result, you must use the correct carry forward entry option (see table in Section 5c).

Learners must decide at the point of entry whether they are going to carry forward the NEA result or not.

The result for the NEA component may be carried forward for the lifetime of the specification and there is no restriction on the number of times the result may be carried forward. However, only the most recent non-absent result may be carried forward.

When the result is carried forward, the grade boundaries from the previous year of entry will be used to calculate a new weighted mark for the carried forward component, so the value of the original mark is preserved.

4d. AI use in the NEA

4

Teachers delivering NEA components **must** follow the JCQ guidelines: ***AI Use in Assessments: Your role in protecting the integrity of qualifications.***

Teachers are responsible for monitoring students' progress to ensure that:

- work meets the NEA marking criteria
- work can be confidently authenticated as the student's own
- the student is **not** rewarded if they have used AI tools in such a way that mean they have not **independently** met the marking criteria.

Teachers must provide sufficient supervision to be able to confidently authenticate that the work submitted is the student's independent work.

You can access the forms here on our [Assessment](#) page or from our Forms finder tool when selecting a qualification and subject with moderated units or components. They are also available in the Assessment > Forms section on Teach Cambridge.

For further information on AI, please see the following guidance on our website: [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) support](#).

4e. Results and certificates

Grade scale

A level qualifications are graded on the scale: A*, A, B, C, D, E, where A* is the highest. Learners who fail to reach the minimum standard for E will be Unclassified

(U). Only subjects in which grades A* to E are attained will be recorded on certificates.

Results

Results are released to centres and learners for information and to allow any queries to be resolved before certificates are issued.

Centres will have access to the following results information for each learner:

- the grade for the qualification
- the raw mark for each component
- the total weighted mark for the qualification.

The following supporting information will be available:

- raw mark grade boundaries for each component
- weighted mark grade boundaries for each qualification(s).

Until certificates are issued, results are deemed to be provisional and may be subject to amendment.

4

4f. Post-results services

A number of post-results services are available:

- Review of results – If you are not happy with the outcome of a learner's results, centres may request a review of their moderation and/or marking.
- Missing and incomplete results – This service should be used if an individual subject result for a learner is missing, or the learner has been omitted entirely from the results supplied.

4g. Malpractice

Any breach of the regulations for the conduct of examinations and coursework may constitute malpractice (which includes maladministration) and must be reported to OCR as soon as it is detected.

Detailed information on malpractice can be found in the JCQ publication *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures*.

5 Appendices

5a. Overlap with other qualifications

There is significant overlap between the content of this specification suite and that for OCR's AS Level in Art and Design to allow for co-teachability.

There is a degree of overlap between the content of these specifications and those for Advanced GCE

Applied Art and Design, particularly if an applied approach to these specifications is adopted. There is a small degree of overlap with GCE Design and Technology which again is more significant if an applied approach is taken in the Art and Design specifications.

5b. Avoidance of bias

The A level qualification and subject criteria have been reviewed in order to identify any feature which could disadvantage learners who share a protected

characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010. All reasonable steps have been taken to minimise any such disadvantage.

5c. Carry forward entry codes

Entry code	Qualification Title	Code	Components
H600CA	Art, Craft and Design	01	Art, Craft and Design: Personal investigation
		82	Art, Craft and Design: Externally set task
H600CB	Art, Craft and Design	81	Art, Craft and Design: Personal investigation
		02	Art, Craft and Design: Externally set task
H601CA	Art and Design: Fine Art	01	Fine Art: Personal investigation
		82	Fine Art: Externally set task
H601CB	Art and Design: Fine Art	81	Fine Art: Personal investigation
		02	Fine Art: Externally set task
H602CA	Art and Design: Graphic Communication	01	Graphic Communication: Personal investigation
		82	Graphic Communication: Externally set task
H602CB	Art and Design: Graphic Communication	81	Graphic Communication: Personal investigation
		02	Graphic Communication: Externally set task
H603CA	Art and Design: Photography	01	Photography: Personal investigation
		82	Photography: Externally set task
H603CB	Art and Design: Photography	81	Photography: Personal investigation
		02	Photography: Externally set task
H604CA	Art and Design: Textile Design	01	Textile Design: Personal investigation
		82	Textile Design: Externally set task
H604CB	Art and Design: Textile Design	81	Textile Design: Personal investigation
		02	Textile Design: Externally set task
H605CA	Art and Design: Three-Dimensional Design	01	Three-Dimensional Design: Personal investigation
		82	Three-Dimensional Design: Externally set task
H605CB	Art and Design: Three-Dimensional Design	81	Three-Dimensional Design: Personal investigation
		02	Three-Dimensional Design: Externally set task
H606CA	Art and Design: Critical and Contextual Studies	01	Critical and Contextual Studies: Personal investigation
		82	Critical and Contextual Studies: Externally set task
H606CB	Art and Design: Critical and Contextual Studies	81	Critical and Contextual Studies: Personal investigation
		02	Critical and Contextual Studies: Externally set task

Components shown in **bold** for each option are those for which previous results are being carried forward.

5d. Moderated upload entry codes

Entry code	Qualification Title	Code	Components
H600B	Art, Craft and Design	03	Art, Craft and Design: Personal investigation
		04	Art, Craft and Design: Externally set task
H601B	Art and Design: Fine Art	03	Fine Art: Personal investigation
		04	Fine Art: Externally set task
H602B	Art and Design: Graphic Communication	03	Graphic Communication: Personal investigation
		04	Graphic Communication: Externally set task
H603B	Art and Design: Photography	03	Photography: Personal investigation
		04	Photography: Externally set task
H604B	Art and Design: Textile Design	03	Textile Design: Personal investigation
		04	Textile Design: Externally set task
H605B	Art and Design: Three-Dimensional Design	03	Three-Dimensional Design: Personal investigation
		04	Three-Dimensional Design: Externally set task
H606B	Art and Design: Critical and Contextual Studies	03	Critical and Contextual Studies: Personal investigation
		04	Critical and Contextual Studies: Externally set task

Summary of updates

Date	Version	Section	Title of section	Change
June 2018	1.1	Front cover	Disclaimer	Addition of disclaimer
November 2018	1.2	i) 3d. 4c. ii) 5c.	Retaking the qualification Non exam assessment Carry forward entry codes	Update to the wording for carry forward rules New carry forward entry code table
January 2019	1.3	5c	Carry forward entry codes	Correction to carry forward entry code table
January 2020	1.4	4c 4e	Non exam assessment Post-results services	Amend Enquiries about results to review of results Amend Enquiries about results to review of results
				Update to specification covers to meet digital accessibility standards
February 2023	1.5	3c	Total qualification time	Update to include Total qualification time and Guided learning hours (TQT/GLH) to comply with Qualifications in Wales regulations
March 2024	1.6	3d, 3e 4a Checklist	Qualification availability, Language Pre-assessment	Inclusion of disclaimer regarding availability and language Update to include resilience guidance Inclusion of Teach Cambridge
April 2024	1.7	2b	Component 2	Removal of reference to admin guide
March 2026	1.8	Front cover 2a 3g 4a 4d	Overview of AS Level in Design and Technology (H004, H005, H006) Retaking the qualification Pre-assessment AI use in the NEA	Withdrawal information of qualification including final first teach date and final assessment opportunity date. Minor rewording in generic section 1a. Addition of section 3 and 4 of final assessment date New section 4d added - AI use in the NEA

Date	Version	Section	Title of section	Change
April 2026	2.0	Covers, page footers, section 1a and 4d		Updated covers, footers and certificate title to reflect the new Cambridge OCR brand. Inside cover includes statement: 'About our new name'. Minor rewording in generic section 1a.
September 2026	2.1	Front cover		Added the final assessment date for this version of the specification.
		3i	Non exam assessment – Marking criteria	
		4c	Non exam assessment - Moderation	Added wording on digital moderation
		5d	Moderated upload entry codes	Added new section with codes for moderated upload options





Contact the team at:

☎ **01223 553998**

✉ **art&design@ocr.org.uk**

🌐 **ocr.org.uk**

To stay up to date with all the relevant news about our qualifications, register for email updates at **ocr.org.uk/updates**

Visit our Online Support Centre at **support.ocr.org.uk**

Sign up for **Teach Cambridge** to access your planning, teaching and assessment support material.



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS & ASSESSMENT

Cambridge OCR is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

Cambridge OCR is a Company Limited by Guarantee and an exempt charity. Registered in England.

Registered office: The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA. Registered company number: 3484466.

We operate academic and vocational qualifications regulated by Ofqual, Qualifications Wales and CCEA as listed in their qualifications registers.

We are committed to providing a fully accessible experience across all our products, platforms, and websites. Find out more about our [accessibility standards](#).

© Cambridge OCR 2026. All rights reserved. We retain the copyright on all our publications. However, our registered centres are permitted to copy and distribute our material for their own internal use, in line with any specific restrictions detailed in the publication. Find out more about our [copyright policies](#).

We update our publications regularly so please check you have the most up-to-date version.

We cannot be held responsible for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and do not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

When we update our specifications, you'll see a new version number and a summary of the changes. While we do our best to reflect these changes in all associated resources on [Teach Cambridge](#), if you notice any discrepancies, please refer to the latest specification on our website and [let us know](#).

Our resources do not represent any teaching method we expect you to use. We cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions in our resources.